

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 HAMILT 00334 152034Z

71

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13

EURE-00 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00 /079 W

----- 129285

P 151920Z SEP 76

FM AMCONSUL HAMILTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2181

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L HAMILTON 334

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, PDEV, BD, UK

SUBJECT: BERMUDA INDEPENDENCE; A GIANT STEP FORWARD?

SUMMARY: IN A MOVE THAT APPARENTLY CAUGHT UK FOREIGN COMMONWEALTH OFFICE (FCO) AND THE ACTING GOVERNOR WITH THEIR POLITICAL PANTS DOWN, PREMIER SHARPE AND CABINET ON SEPTEMBER 10 DISCLOSED TENTATIVE PLANS FOR DEFINITE MOVES TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE WITHIN NEXT 6 WEEKS. CABINET HAS REPORTEDLY INDICATED DESIRE TO HAVE GOVERNOR INCLUDE ANNOUNCEMENT OF A PUBLIC REFERENDUM ON INDEPENDENCE IN OCTOBER 29 SPEECH FROM THE THRONE. END SUMMARY.

1. AT THE REQUEST OF PREMIER JACK SHARPE, FCO DEPUTY UNDERSECRETARY FOR DEPENDENT TERRITORIES, E.N. LARMOUR SPENT SEVERAL DAYS IN BERMUDA LAST WEEK FOR WHAT WAS EXPECTED TO BE A QUOTE TOUR D'HORIZON UNQUOTE ON CURRENT AND FUTURE GOB/UK RELATIONS. QUITE UNEXPECTEDLY SHARPE AND MAJORITY OF CABINET WHO MET WITH LARMOUR PRESENTED A SCENARIO WHICH CONTEMPLATED INDEPENDENCE FOR BERMUDA WITHIN 2 TO 3 YEARS.
2. SHARPE AND CABINET HAVE REPORTEDLY TOLD LARMOUR THAT THEY WANT TO INCLUDE AN ANNOUNCEMENT OF GENERAL REFERENDUM ON INDEPENDENCE IN THE GOVERNOR'S OCTOBER 29 SPEECH FROM THE THRONE. IN SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSIONS WITH CONGEN, LARMOUR AND ACTING GOVERNOR G.P. LLOYD, STRESSED APPARENT EARNESTNESS OF CURRENT GOB INDEPENDENCE SENTIMENT. LLOYD AND FCO WERE OBVIOUSLY SURPRISED BY CABINET DECISION.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 HAMILT 00334 152034Z

LLOYD NOW EXPECTS CONSULTATIVE REFERENDUM WILL BE HELD

WITHIN NEXT 10 TO 12 MONTHS. WITH AFFIRMATIVE VOTE ANTICIPATED, LLOYD ENVISIONS SUBSEQUENT 12 TO 24 MONTH PERIOD OF GESTATION THROUGH CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE AND OTHER REQUISITE FORMALITIES.

3. AS LARMOUR WAS CAUGHT OFF GUARD BY PRECIPITIOUS CABINET DECISION, HE WAS UNPREPARED TO ANSWER VERY POINTED QUESTIONS PUT FORTH BY THE CABINET, I.E., WILL UK ENTER INTO BI-LATERAL TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP TO PROTECT COMMERCIAL INTERESTS; WILL UK CONTINUE TO PROVIDE CONSULAR SERVICES TO BERMUDIANS ABROAD; WILL INDEPENDENCE REQUIRE MEMBERSHIP IN AND ESTABLISHMENT OF A MISSION AT UN (NOT SURPRISINGLY, THE CABINET WAS MOST INTERESTED IN QUANTIFYING THE EXPENSE INVOLVED IN ATTAINING INDEPENDENCE). IN VIEW OF APPARENT EARNESTNESS OF THE DECISION AND DESIRE OF EARLY TIMING OF ANNOUNCEMENT FOR REFERENDUM, LARMOUR HAS ARRANGED FOR SHARPE TO MEET WITH MINISTER FOR COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS TED ROLANDS LATER THIS MONTH IN LONDON. LLOYD WILL KEEP CONGEN INFORMED HERE OF DEVELOPMENTS AND LARMOUR OR ROLANDS WILL BRIEF EMBASSY LONDON UPON LARMOUR'S RETURN TO UK O/A SEPTEMBER 21.

4. DETAILS OF CONVERSATIONS WITH LARMOUR, LLOYD AND GOB OFFICIALS AND ANY APPROPRIATE FURTHER ANALYSIS WILL BE TRANSMITTED BY AIRGRAM.

COMMENT: ALTHOUGH SOME MINOR IRRITANTS IN GOB/UK BILATERAL RELATIONS HAD SURFACED IN RECENT MONTHS (SHIPPING REGISTRY, AIR ROUTES, LAW OF THE SEA) UBP DECISION TO LAUNCH BERMUDA ON ROAD TO INDEPENDENCE IS CLEARLY MOTIVATED BY INTERNAL POLITICS. WITH DISAPPOINTING RESULTS OF MAY ELECTIONS AND ANTICIPATED LOSS OF YET ANOTHER SEAT IN SANDY'S NORTH BY-ELECTION LATER THIS MONTH, UBP IS CLEARLY PLANNING TO PRE-EMPT OPPOSITION PLP ON ISSUE OF INDEPENDENCE. MEMBERS ENVISION THAT IF PROPOSED SCENARIO IS REALIZED, UBP WILL BECOME FIRMLY ENTRENCHED IN THE PUBLIC MIND AS THE PARTY THAT BROUGHT INDEPENDENCE TO BERMUDA AND HOPEFULLY TURN THE POLITICAL TIDE BEFORE THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION IN 1980-81.

ALTHOUGH GOB NOW SEEMS FIRMLY COMMITTED TO LAUNCHING INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT SOON, CONGEN WILL AWAIT WITH INTEREST RESULTS OF SHARPE/ROLANDS DISCUSSION LATER THIS MONTH.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 HAMILT 00334 152034Z

RAND

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPORTS, POLITICAL SITUATION, SELFDETERMINATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976HAMILT00334
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760348-0656
From: HAMILTON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760959/aaaabyho.tel
Line Count: 108
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19 MAY 2004 by MartinML>; APPROVED <10 SEP 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BERMUDA INDEPENDENCE; A GIANT STEP FORWARD? SUMMARY: IN A MOVE THAT APPARENTLY CAUGHT UK FOREIGN COMMONWEALTH OFFICE (FCO) AND THE ACTING GOVERNOR
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, PDEV, BD, UK
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006